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ABSTRACT

As a result of a 1997 change in federal law, this on-going 5-year study evaluated the effects of elimination of some prior regulations on the employment choices of 854 Wyoming adults in the Medicaid Home and Community-Based Service Waiver program. The study examined who worked, who wanted to work, the average hours worked, the average percentage of work time spent in integrated settings, and the average dollars earned. It also examined the number of people in day habilitation, the average hours in day habilitation, and the average time people spent in integrated settings in the community. Early outcomes of this study indicate that the choice of each person about whether they want to work or not has had a great impact on activities chosen. Additionally, most of the people chose a lot of activity. The outcome of percentage of work integration is a function of a set of statistically significant personal characteristics of the people served and services they have chosen and used. The percentage of hours worked and dollars earned is related to the employment situation of each of Wyoming's counties. (DB)

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Home and Community-Based Waivers as a New Source of Employment Funding: Changes in Attitude, Changes in Latitude

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Abstract

In the summer of 1997, Congress allowed the quarter of a million individuals with developmental disabilities on our nation's Home and Community-Based Service Waivers the opportunity to work. This change eliminated the prior regulations that the people served had to been in an Intermediate Care Facility for people with Mental Retardation (ICF/MR) or nursing facility. Ten states modified their Waivers to allow work in the first year, and 20 more began the process. This paper describes the before and after results for 854 Wyoming adults who were influenced by this enlightened governmental policy. This study examines who worked, importantly, who wanted to, the average hours worked, the average percentage of work time spent in integrated settings, and average dollars earned. Also examined is the number of people in day habilitation, the average hours in day habilitation, and the average time people spent in integrated settings in the community. This statewide, five year, change agentry project has had some impact on making better lives possible in the community using existing dollars. Even the earliest information suggests that the choice of each person served about whether they want to work or not has had a great impact on the activities chosen. Additionally, most of the people chose a lot of activity. The outcome of percentage or work integration is explained by a set of statistically significant personal characteristics of the people served and services they have chosen and used. The percentage of hours worked and dollars earned is significantly explained by the employment situation of each of Wyoming's counties. Also the use of simple graphic outcome displays of quarterly results to gradually change statewide local team programming decisions is demonstrated. The challenges in front of us include increasing employment, earnings, and job benefits while reducing the number of people in day habilitation (when they want to work).

Introduction

In December 1997 a concerned group of parents and advocates who were members of the Wyoming's Governor's Council of Developmental Disabilities, the "out of the box group" approached the leadership of the Department of Health, Division of Developmental Disabilities. This concerned group requested that the Division explore ways to have more community integration, better employment pay and benefits, and less use of segregated day habilitation with adults with mental retardation who were on Wyoming's Home and Community-Based Waiver Services (HCBS) Waiver.

In 1997 the Division has already joined nine other states and modified its HCBS Adult Waiver to allow people in the Waiver to use prevocational and supported employment services. This meant that even if they had not been one of the 17 individuals statewide who had moved out of the single ICF/MR at the Wyoming State Training School they were now eligible to use these two Waiver services. This meant that in Wyoming, from July 1998 forward, all of the adults on the HCBS Waiver could use prevocational or supported employment services on the Waiver.

Wyoming has enjoyed some progress in the area of supported employment and integrated employment with positive statewide outcomes with the following rankings:

16th **Supported employment** as a **percentage** of total day-workers (30%of total day-work participants average in nation is 20% of total of day work participants) (Braddock, et. al, 1998)
14 **Supported employment participants** 49 per 100K (Braddock, et. al, 2000)
13 **Integrated employment outcome**, 48 per 100,000 (1996 data of 37 reporting states, by Butterworth, Gilmore, Kiernan, Shalock, 1999)
6 **Supported employment** per capita spending. (Braddock, et. al, 2000)

Literature Review

The Medicaid Home and Community-Based (HCB) Waiver is the primary funding source for long-term care for individuals with developmental disabilities (West, Revell, Kregel & Bricout, 1999). In their national survey in 1998 there was very low utilization of supported employment, primarily due to the previous regulatory limits on eligibility for the service. They also report that 18 state coordinators out of 48 respondents revealed large number of Waiver participants were receiving employment services under other services categories. Mayer, Heal, and Trach reported in 1992 that in a survey of six western states that income allowance policies of state Medicaid agencies sometimes provided incentives or disincentives for ICF/MR residents. Shafer, Wehman, Kregel, and West (1990) report that surveyed 27 states and over 1,400 programs of supported employment were authorized by state agencies during a 3-year study. Individual placement options remained prevalent and employment outcomes associated with this approach appeared to be superior to outcomes associated with other models. Persons with mental retardation were the most frequent participants.

Employment outcomes for people with severe disabilities provide the field with an opportunity for to increase job opportunities for those with severe mental retardation, behavioral challenges, and multiple disabilities (Mank, Cioffi, Yovanoff, 1998). National data reported by state MR/DD agencies for integrated and segregated employment and facility-based nonwork services provided during FYs 1988 and 1990 were examined by McGaughey, Kierman, McNally, & Gilmore (1995). The percentage and total number of individuals in integrated employment grew significantly across the 2 years. However, there were no significant changes in the percentage or number served in facility-based settings. State MR/DD agencies continue to fund a dual service system, with the vast percentage of total resources allocated to segregated programs. They called, as this study does, for policy and funding incentives to be developed to stimulate the conversion of segregated services to integrated employment.

The National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) and the Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center has, in early 2000, conducted a survey of all states. This effort was designed to see how changes in the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Regulations have effected supported employment practices throughout the United States. This study is entitled: Employing

the Medicaid HCB Waiver Program to Pay for Employment-Related Services A Survey of the Impact of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. This valuable national study will be published later this year.

Method

One immediate answer of the Division of Developmental Disabilities, in conjunction with the Division's Advisory Council, was the beginning of a quarterly five-year survey covering nine questions for each adult served in Wyoming who was a client of the Division of Developmental Disabilities for the entire quarter. The one page survey form resulting from this effort is recreated here:

DDD Adult Employment and Integration Database
1998 - 2002

Vision: Establish a five-year plan to increase adult employment and integrated day habilitation by an annual increase of 10% over the initial 1998 baseline for each of the following seven service and support outcome measures.

The Division will collect this information four times a year and develop a database that provides reports for the state, advocates, providers, consumers, families, and guardians. This information will be keyed by individual served. Remember the Division is committed to serving people with the most severe challenges and is currently serving an average adult Waiver client with an ICAP service score of 46. This individual often needs moderate personal care and frequent supervision that historically might live in a skilled nursing facility. Even though we are serving this group we are also committed to letting people work who want to. We also want them work and engage in other life activities in integrated settings as much as possible. For each person served (client) during the last three months please complete the following nine questions:

Date of this report ___-___-_____.

Name of person served _____.

Social security number of person served ___-___-_____.

DDD Medicaid provider number of the day services provider 1001_____.

DDD Medicaid provider number of the employment provider 1001_____.

DDD Medicaid provider number of provider filling out this form if not listed above 1001_____.

Funding Source ___ (1 = Adult DDD Waiver 2= Adult State Contract)

1. Is this person in day habilitation _____? (0=No 1=Yes)

2. How many hours did this person spend in day habilitation in the last 3 months _____?

3. What percentage of time in their day habilitation programming did they spend in settings where at least 50% of people did not have a developmental disability _____%?

4. Does this individual want to work _____? (0=No 1=Yes) (If No, you are done.)

5. Is the person in any type of employment (paid work) _____? (0=No 1=Yes)

6. Dollars earned by the person in all employment $_____? (Total dollars earned in the last 3 months.)

7. Hours the person worked in paid employment _____? (Total hours worked in last 3 months.)

8. Of the number hours spent in paid employment (Question # 7) what percentage of time did the person spend in integrated work settings where at least 50% of people did not have a developmental disability _____%?

9. What was the value in dollars of their job benefits in the three month period $_____?

This form was used for the second quarter of calendar 1998 before the modification of the HCBS Adult Waiver went into effect in the summer and for each quarter after. Prevocational and supported employment service use could be tracked as well as the desire for employment and the dollars, benefits, hours worked, and hours engaged in integrated community day habilitation. This information was tracked for people funded by state or HCBS Waiver funds. It could also be tracked by whether or not the individual indicated that he wanted to be employed.

First Survey for Employment and Integration for April, May, & June, 1998

This is the first time that this information has been available for adults with developmental disabilities in Wyoming. The picture presented has not been changed by CARF (CARF...The Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission) and Adult Waiver changes that began July 1, 1998. These changes should increase work and integration opportunities because people on the Waiver can work and people in community supported employment can be paid less than minimum wage using sheltered workshop certificates. The picture described here suggests that people are engaged in more activity than we may have thought and that the picture of what they do is more complex with significant variations in the day activities that people have chosen. For example, most people on the adult Waiver in day habilitation (59%) work. The goal of this effort over the next five years is to increase the numbers of people working, fringe benefits, integration, and earnings by 10% each of the next five years.

Table 1. Results of the Wyoming DDD Adult Employment and Integration Database Before the Change: April, May, June, 1998

	Number of People	Total Hours (possible 480 hours a quarter)	People In Day Hab	Hours Day Hab	Day Hab Percentage Integrated	Quarterly Earnings	Hours Worked	Work Percentage Integrated	Job Benefits
Not Employed	319	279	268	279	16%	$0	0	0%	$0
Interested in Work	**57**	**243**	**46**	**243**	**25%**	**$0**	**0**	**0%**	**$0**
Not Interested in Work	**262**	**287**	**222**	**287**	**14%**	**$0**	**0**	**0%**	**$0**
Employed	522	294	291	116	10%	$689	178	35%	$65
No Work Interest	**2**	**460**	**2**	**445**	**8%**	**$69**	**16**	**50%**	**$0**
Interested in Work	**520**	**293**	**289**	**115**	**10%**	**$692**	**178**	**35%**	**$65**
Total	841	288	559	178	12%	$427	110	21%	$40

There are 841 adults in this survey. Their overall average ICAP service score is 49 with a standard deviation of 21. Most of them (522) are employed and are interested in work (520). Their mean ICAP service score is 56 with a standard deviation of 18. People funded by the Waiver are working in integrated settings where 50% of the people they work with do not have a disability 33% of the time. They work 155 hours and are in day habilitation 188 hours. They are in integrated day activity 19% of the time. They earn $521 and have job benefits of $37. People funded by the state DDD contract are working in integrated settings 48% of the time and have job benefits worth $59. They are in integrated day habilitation 7% and spend 69 hours in day habilitation. They earn $1,083 dollars during the quarter.

There are 319 people who do not work. Most people (262) are not interested in work at this time. The group who does not work is in day habilitation and is in integrated activities in day habilitation 16% of the time

Overall, the "average person served" (a composite of everyone in the group) had job benefits that are worth $40, they worked an average of 110 hours and earned an average of $427 during the three months. Twenty-one percent of their work was in integrated settings. They had 288 hours of combined activity (excluding case management and therapies) out of a possible 480 hours during the quarter. They spent an overall average of 178 hours in day habilitation that was 12% integrated. The summary results for everyone is also charted in Figure 1 located at the end of this paper. This graph reflects the summary information for everyone with developmental disabilities served in Wyoming during the 7 quarters currently collected in this survey.

Table 2. After the Change, Current Survey for Employment and Integration for October, November, December, 1999

	Number of People	Total Hours (possible 480 hours a quarter)	People In Day Hab	Hours Day Hab	Day Hab Percentage Integrated	Quarterly Earnings	Hours Worked	Work Percentage Integrated	Job Benefits
Not Employed	320	294	275	294	17%	$0	0	0%	$0
Interested in Work	**55**	**218**	**38**	**218**	**14%**	**$0**	**0**	**0%**	**$0**
Not Interested in Work	**265**	**309**	**237**	**309**	**18%**	**$0**	**0**	**0%**	**$0**
Employed	534	291	294	122	14%	$659	169	43%	$54
No Work Interest	**2**	**286**	**2**	**241**	**14%**	**$101**	**45**	**50%**	**$0**
Interested in Work	**532**	**291**	**292**	**121**	**14%**	**$661**	**170**	**43%**	**$54**
Total	854	292	569	186	15%	$412	106	27%	$34

After the change in Waiver regulations people funded by the Waiver are working in integrated settings where 50% of the people they work with do not have a disability 38% of the time (up 5%). They work 149 hours (down 6 hours) and are in day habilitation 223 hours (up 35 hours). They are in integrated day activity 18% of the time (down 1%). They earn $522 (up one dollar) and have job benefits of $37 (up 9 dollars). There are small but valuable increases in the percentage of work integration, day habilitation time, and job benefits. Day habilitation community integration and the hours worked are slightly down. Most (57%) of the people on the adult Waiver are employed

There were no changes in state funding regulations. People funded by state contract dollars are working in integrated settings 59% of the time (up 11%) and have job benefits worth $64 (up $5). They are in integrated day habilitation 4% (down 3%) and spend 31 hours (down 38) in day habilitation. They earn $1,043 dollars (down $40) during the quarter.

Analyses of Individual Changes, Second Quarter 1998 to Fourth Quarter 1999.

On the good side, the number of people employed grew slightly from 522 to 534. The hours in day habilitation increased slightly from 178 hours in the quarter to 186. The day habilitation time spent in community integration activities is higher moving from 12% to 15%. Finally, the percentage of time people who are employed are spending it in integrated work settings with three or fewer people with disabilities has increased from 35% to 43%.

On Table 1 it becomes clear that the percentage of work integration before and after the change is highly related to characteristics of the people being served and the services they select and need. The individual characteristics include level of mental retardation, ICAP broad independence, ICAP general maladaptive, autism, deafness, severe mental illness, health limitations, and use of psychotropic medications. The percentage of integration was also influenced by living with family, living independently, and use of services. The services include residential, day, and in-home habilitation, therapies, nursing, personal care, psychology, specialized medical equipment, and home modifications.

Table 1. Percent Work Integration

Funding Source	n=771	Second Quarter, 1998	Fourth Quarter, 1999
Simple ANOVA, Means			
Contract	n=155	40.64	45.81
Waiver	n=616	16.87	21.66

Funding: $F_{(1,769)}=67.19$, $p<.0001$; **Time: $F_{(1,769)}=25.15$, $p<.0001$**; Time x Funding: $F_{(1,769)}=3.11$, n.s.

ANACOVA, LS Means	n=750		
Contract		34.92	40.84
Waiver		17.82	23.27

Covariates: All the client characteristics and service use of adult Waiver participants noted in the text.

Funding: $F_{(1,738)}=21.85$, $p<.0001$; Time: $F_{(1,738)}<1$; Time x Funding: $F_{(1,738)}<1$.

On the challenging side, adults with developmental disabilities who are receiving services are working fewer hours and getting less pay and fewer benefits. The average person lost, in the last reported three-month period, 5 hours of work, 16 dollars in wages, and 6 dollars in fringe benefits. However, things are not as they first appear. In the second quarter of 1998 and the fourth quarter of 1999 the hours worked and dollars earned by state funded and Waiver funded workers were highly significantly related with the local Wyoming county's changes in the number of people employed from 1998 to 1999. This is noted in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Hours Worked

Funding Source	n=771	Second Quarter, 1998	Fourth Quarter, 1999
Simple ANOVA, Means			
Contract	n=155	209.09	191.71
Waiver	n=616	88.01	87.22

Funding: $F_{(1,769)}=105.25$, $p<.0001$; Time: $F_{(1,769)}=5.22$, $p<.0226$; Time x Funding: $F_{(1,769)}=4.36$, $p<.0372$.

ANACOVA, LS Means	n=618		
Contract		185.40	214.29
Waiver		87.43	86.30

Covariate: County Percentage Change in Employment, 1999.

Funding: $F_{(1,615)}=15.92$, $p<.0001$; **Time: $F_{(1,615)}=3.43$, n.s.**; Time x Funding: $F_{(1,615)}=2.85$, n.s.

Table 3. Earnings

Funding Source	n=771	Second Quarter, 1998	Fourth Quarter, 1999
Simple ANOVA, Means			
Contract	n=155	$906.81	$871.46
Waiver	n=616	$313.01	$307.66

Funding: $F_{(1,769)}=117.08$, $p<.0001$; **Time: $F_{(1,769)}=1.11$, n.s.**; Time x Funding: $F_{(1,769)}<1$.

ANACOVA, LS Means	n=618		
Contract		$645.59	$754.61
Waiver		$308.36	$302.92

Covariate: County Percentage Change in Employment, 1999.

Funding: $F_{(1,615)}=9.23$, $p<.0025$; **Time: $F_{(1,615)}<1$**; Time x Funding: $F_{(1,615)}=1.37$, n.s.

Discussion

In Wyoming there is a fundamental change in the HCB Waivers and it has had some effect of the services and supports that people use. The changes in the Medicaid HCB regulations have allowed people to have the services of prevocational and supported employment clearly identified in their individual plans of care. In 1999 there are 39 adults who can formally claim the Waiver service of supported employment in their plans. No one had supported employment formally in an individual Waiver plan before. However, in FY 96-97, 119 people on the Waiver and 63 people using state funds used supported employment informally and, even now, with enlightened changes in the regulations, 82 adults use supported employment services on the Waiver informally. Overall, 182 people had supported employment services in FY 96-97 and in FY 98-99.

In the 8 quarters charted in Figure 1 there is a simple and direct summary of the results of this survey. This image was built each quarter and widely distributed. It does clearly indicate the progress, for example, in work integration percentages over the period. Also, however, it shows many of these measure have been consistently and relatively unchanging overtime. This graphic is one of the primary ways the progress of local teams was shared statewide with the teams, organizations, and many interested stakeholders. It is essential that ways be found to provide most people with a simple way to chart the progress of the project.

Vocational rehabilitation in Wyoming pays 35 dollars per hour for a job coach and 35 dollars per hour for job development. Most, 57%, of the people in Wyoming on the adult Waiver after the regulations changed have some level of employment. The number of people using prevocational Waiver services climbed from 5 people in FY 96-97 to 64 in FY 98-99. The average annual cost in FY 98-99 for the day Waiver HCB services was day habilitation $12,385, supported employment $3,945, and prevocational services $6,755. The group rates in the adult Waiver are designed so that the individuals would receive the same rate of 57 dollars a day. However, the DOORS (individual budgeted amount) technology used in Wyoming pays more money for people with more challenges. The early actual Waiver service reimbursement has been less for supported employment.

This survey has discovered that people are working, more than we knew. Also, there is some progress, 5% more integration in community work and 5% integration for day community programming efforts. The integration efforts should continue to expand. It would be better if there was more hours of work, more dollars earned, and more fringe benefits. These practical outcomes seem, in the early results of this study, to be shaped heavily by the county employment situations where the person works and lives. Efforts to continue the progress of the people we serve to work, learn, and earn money in as integrated settings as possible should continue. Additional research will help describe this ongoing challenge.

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Figure 1. Wyoming Adults With DD Employment & Integration Survey 1998 to 2003